

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 308928

LIMDIS, FOR TELATT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETEL, ITU

SUBJECT: ITU: D-1 POST (COOK POSITION)

REF: GENEVA 9973

O'NEILL TELEPHONE DEPSEC GEN BUTLER DECEMBER 20 TO
DISCUSS POSTPONEMENT OF COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
REPORTED IN REFTEL. BUTLER STATED THAT POSTPONEMENT WAS
ROUTINE MATTER BECAUSE SOME MEMBERS OF COORDINATION
COMMITTEE WOULD NOT BE IN GENEVA, INCLUDING SEC GEN MILI.
IN RESPONSE TO COMMENT THAT IT IS DEPARTMENT UNDERSTANDING
THAT MEETING WAS ABRUPTLY POSTPONED ON THE MORNING OF
THE DAY FOR WHICH IT WAS SCHEDULED, BUTLER SAID THAT
HE HAD BEEN AWARE OF POSTPONEMENT A DAY AND A HALF PREVIOUS.

BUTLER SAID THAT COOK WAS EXTENDED THROUGH END OF MARCH
BECAUSE OF HEAVY WORK SCHEDULE, INCLUDING 77 WARC AND
ACTIVITY STEMMING FROM CCITT PLENARY. WORKLOAD PLUS
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SOME PERSONNEL SHORTAGES DUE TO HOLIDAYS AND RETIREMENTS
HAD CREATED PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES IN
CONFERENCES AND COMMON SERVICES DIVISION. CONSEQUENTLY,
SEC GEN MILI ASKED COOK TO STAY ON. BUTLER SAID THAT U.S.
HAD TWO EXCELLENT CANDIDATES AMONG THE NUMBER OF WELL-

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS. HE HAS PERSONALLY TALKED TO OR INTERVIEWED SEVERAL OF THE OTHERS. O'NEILL RE-STATED STRONG U.S. DESIRE TO SEE AN AMERICAN CONTINUE IN THIS POSITION.

AN HOUR AFTER THIS CONVERSATION, BUTLER CALLED BACK SAYING THAT HE WAS TROUBLED BY WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS U.S. SUSPICION AT MILI OR BUTLER'S MOTIVES IN POSTPONING MEETING OF COORDINATION COMMITTEE. O'NEILL SAID THAT "SUSPICION" PROBABLY WAS NOT THE PROPER WORD, BUT THAT WHEN DEPARTMENT HAD RECEIVED REPORT FROM GENEVA ABOUT POSTPONEMENT, IT WAS PUZZLED AND CURIOUS ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES. BUTLER SAID THAT THERE WAS NOTHING "SINISTER" REGARDING POSTPONEMENT. O'NEILL REPLIED THAT U.S. WAS PLEASED TO HEAR OF HIS ASSURANCES AND THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THIS MATTER CAREFULLY. BUTLER THEN MADE LENGTHY PLEA THAT U.S. SUPPORT AT NEXT SESSION OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL UPGRADING THIS POSITION TO D-2. O'NEILL REPLIED THAT AT LAST ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL SESSION A MAJORITY OF COUNCILLORS, INCLUDING U.S., FELT THAT SECRETARIAT HAD NOT ADEQUATELY SUPPORTED REQUEST FOR UP-GRADING POSITION. WE WOULD BE OPEN MINDED AT NEXT SESSION BUT IT WAS RESPONSIBILITY OF SECRETARIAT TO MAKE CONVINCING CASE.

COMMENT: DESPITE BUTLER EXPLANATION THAT ABSENCE FROM GENEVA OF SOME MEMBERS OF COORDINATION COMMITTEE WAS REASON FOR POSTPONEMENT, AND THAT FACT OF COOK'S EXTENSION LESSENED REQUIREMENT FOR EARLY DECISION, CONFIDENTIAL

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DEPARTMENT IS NOT WHOLLY SATISFIED WITH EXPLANATION. IT IS DIFFICULT TO DEFINE BUT IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION, BUTLER GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF BEING SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE AND PERHAPS EVASIVE. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT IMPORTANT THAT MISSION FOLLOW DEVELOPMENTS ON THIS ISSUE VERY CLOSELY. ROBINSON

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